GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2131
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2002
MINIMUM WAGES TO BEEDI WORKERS
PRABHUNATH SINGH

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the minimum wages for the beedi workers differ from State to State;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to enforce uniform wages for Beedi workers all over the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN)

(a) & (b): Under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, the Central and State Government fix, revise and enforce minimum wages in the schedule employments under their respective jurisdictions . Beedi making is a scheduled employment in the State Sphere. There is disparity in the minimum wages in various states due to variations in socio-economic and agro-climate conditions, cost of living, productivity, paying capacity and local conditions influencing the wage rates.

(c): With a view to reduce the disparity, the Central Government issued guidelines in 1987 for setting up Regional Minimum Wages Advisory Committees. These Committees have made a number of recommendations, which include reduction in disparity in minimum wages of different States within a region, setting up Inter-state Coordination Council, consultation with the neighbouring States while fixing/revising minimum wages etc. The Central Government also suggested to the state Governments in February, 1999 for constitution of Committees of officials from adjoining States to explore uniformity in minimum wages in the States within a region. The Central Government also mooted the concept of National Floor Level Wage in 1996 and requested all State Governments to ensure that in none of the scheduled employments the minimum wage was below in floor level wage. Initially it was fixed at Rs.35/-per day based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Rural Labour (1991) and periodically revised based on the rise in the price level. The national floor level wage has been recently revised to Rs.50/- per day w.e.f. 1.9.2002.